

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-7, 11-23, 25-26, and 30 remain in the application for further prosecution. Claims 1, 13, 20 and 30 have been amended. Claims 2, 8-10, 24, 27-29 and 31 were previously canceled.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 3-6, 11-15, 18-20 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0062025 (“Sato”).

Claims 7 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Sato in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,702,675 (“Poole”). Claims 16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as unpatentable over Sato in view of an Official Notice.

Claims 4, 26 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,481,713 (“Perrie”).

Claim Amendments

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 20 to require that the base wagering game has a first mathematical model of player odds and the special feature game has a second, different mathematical model of player odds. The claims have also been amended to require that the outcomes of the player odds from the two mathematical models are displayable on the mechanical reels. The mechanical reels are used for both the base wagering game and the special feature game. The appearance of the mechanical reels is changed to provide visual notification to a player that the special feature game having the second, different mathematical model of player odds is underway. The appearance of the mechanical reels is maintained while the special feature game is played.

Claims 1 and 20 differ from Satoh as special feature games generally provide a greater chance of winning than base games. However, gaming regulations require that a player is notified of a change between the base game and a special feature game. The present claims provide a visual differentiation between base game play and special feature game play, using the same mechanical device for both games. The use of the same mechanical devices such as reels for both the base game and the special feature game, while notifying the player of the transitions between the games, results in more cost effective use of mechanical game components. Previous gaming machines required a first mechanical device such as reels for the base game and a second mechanical device such as dice for the special feature machine increasing the expense of manufacturing a gaming machine.

The Office Action has cited paragraph 54 of Satoh that discloses changing the operation of the lighting in response to a situation such as game activation, normal gaming and transition to a bonus game. Satoh does not disclose nor teach changing the appearance of mechanical reels to indicate the play of a bonus special feature game with different mathematical odds than the base game. Although, the Office Action has asserted that Satoh teaches maintaining the changed appearance of the mechanical reels, this element is not disclosed in either the cited paragraphs 1 or 54 of Satoh. Claims 1 and 20 are thus independently allowable over Satoh for this reason.

The Office Action has cited the combination of Satoh and Perrie against claim 30 which includes the elements of a base game with a first mathematical model and a special feature game with a second, different mathematical model. The Office Action specifically cites Col. 22, ll. 35-40. This section of Perrie indicates that "this version of the game of the present invention can be a stand-alone game either as a table game in a gaming machine, or as a bonus game in which case the game is initiated when a bonus condition arises from the underlying game." Applicant

respectfully submits that Perrie does not teach nor suggest different mathematical models for the base game and the special feature game in either this section or elsewhere.

Applicant respectfully submits that there would be no motivation to combine Satoh and Perrie. Perrie discloses a dice game that could be used as a bonus game in conjunction with standard reel devices. (see Fig. 5). Perrie requires a different mechanical mechanism for the base game such as a set of reels. Perrie's method may notify a player of a special feature game but does not allow the use of the same mechanical device for both the base game and the special feature game as in the present claims. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not apply the teachings of Perrie to Satoh. The motivation stated by the Office Action, namely making a game more interesting to a player, does not apply in the present invention which has the advantage of using the same mechanical devices for the base game and the special feature game. In fact, Perrie would teach away from the present claims, as Perrie requires two separate mechanical devices for the two games, thus resulting in less cost effective gaming machines.

Applicant has also amended claims 1, 20 and 30 to require that the outcomes of the two mathematical models are displayable on the mechanical reels. The combination of Satoh and Perrie would not include this element as it would use a different mechanical device for the special feature game (the mechanical dice of Perrie) and therefore the outcome of the second mathematical model would not be displayable on mechanical reels because the outcomes are based on inherently different devices. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claims 1, 20 and 30 and their dependents are allowable over Satoh and Perrie.

Applicant has also amended claim 13 to require that the slot game has a first mathematical model of player odds and a bonus game using the mechanical reels with a second, different mathematical model of player odds. Claim 13 has also been amended to require that

the outcomes of the mathematical model of player odds for both games are displayable on the mechanical reels. As explained above, Satoh does not disclose a slot game with a first mathematical model and a bonus game using the same reels with a second, different mathematical model of player odds. Further, Perrie does not disclose the change in appearance of mechanical reels in a slot machine. The combination of Satoh and Perrie does not disclose different mathematical models of player odds having outcomes displayable on the mechanical reels.

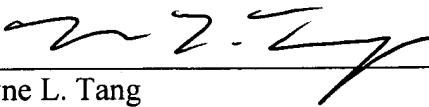
Conclusion

It is the Applicants' belief that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards that effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any matters which may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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